

Rt. 8, Frederick, Md. 21701  
5/31/75

Mr. Ben Bradlee, editor  
Washington Post  
1150 15 St., NW  
Wash., D.C. 20005

Dear Mr. Bradlee,

I hope you will take the time to read the enclosed copy of my today's letter to David Martin, especially the references to the Post.

I read his story before breakfast. Since then I've read another Post story, to which I'll refer not in criticism but as illustrative of the real problems the press, which is confronted with deadlines of which officials are aware, has to contend with.

Thursday's Post contains another illustration of how the press can be used for official purposes with the press innocent and the reporting scrupulously accurate. I do think that if the Post were not hung up on me it might have occurred to someone on Lawrence Meyer's desk to ask me questions I also think are obvious about that story, "Officials Complain of Information Act Demands."

Winning five FOIA suits one way or another, with one being part of the legislative history of the amending and specifically cited in the debates; winning countless others outside of court; and being the writer if not the person who has used this law more than any other ought to qualify me as an expert.

When I realized that in all innocence the Post was being used - you can't be expert on everything - because I start the day early I dashed off a 1,200-1,500 draft of an opinion article going into the other side, before breakfast. I laid it aside until your working day starts rather than taking the time and cost of getting it retyped. (I am as for more than 11 years I have been without income of subsidy.) Then I phoned Geyelin. I could not get through. The second woman to whom I spoke was a real stonewall. I explained to her that I did not want to take the time to retype this piece if there was not the possibility that Geyelin would consider it. I told her it was not a letter to the editor, that I knew it to be impossible to consider everything, that no editor could commit himself to any article without reading it, and that all I wanted to know is whether he would consider the piece without any commitment to use it. Why should I waste the time if as is his right Geyelin feels he wants no editorial article on FOIA? And you are not unaware of other thoughts I could have had. But all I could get was a broken record, "Mr. Geyelin considers everything." Anybody who has spent a day in any newspaper knows better. It simply is impossible.

No reporter, no matter how good - and I believe Martin and George Lardner are good, much better than average good reporters - can know or remember everything. So it is not personal criticism of them or of their editors to note a few questions their today's stories raise. With Martin's central is when JFK first learned of Russian missiles in Cuba. I don't know but I do know the official stories of the past: when McGeorge Bundy awakened him with the news two months after the date in Martin's story. I think it was 10/15/62. There is a date question with Lardner's close, "... the only plot devised against Castro in the 1959-63 period." CIA ones in 1965 have been reported. Policy, at least JFK's, changed in October 1962. Johnson has been quoted widely as lamenting a Murder, Inc., we operated in the Caribbean.

Lardner's unidentified sources told him that Hoover's reason for writing Bobby was "because he feared that any CIA-Mafia deals could compromise government investigations and prosecutions of organized crime cases."

I have an extensive collection of Hoover's letters. In a majority of them self-serving is obvious. He was a master at this, at filing and at semantics. The nature of the Hoover-Kennedy relationship is not secret. Oft-reported accounts have it that one of Bobby's real problems with Hoover was getting him to make any real effort against organized crime.

In filing the thousands of pages of FBI material I have obtained\* there are more than 2,000 pages I have not yet had time to read - I have never had the need to establish a file on what the FBI knew about plots against Castro.

The graf from which I've quoted begins, "Hoover was apparently unaware of any (emph. added) plot to assassinate Castro," sources said...."

If I can't recall any proof I have to the contrary I suspect that somewhere I do have it.

Among those "Indigenous (Cuban) organizations trying to do him [Castro] in" the source referred to Hoover had his own informants. There was also his responsibilities under the Neutrality Act. I know of FBI raids where there was reason to believe assassination of Castro could have been an objective of those raided. I have published a little on this. Come to think of it, there was a Hoover, not just FBI, awareness of an assassination plot. I report it in Whitewash (I), pp. 152ff. From the existing records Hoover delayed investigating this until the Warren Commission directed him to nine months or so later. It is a non-investigation but confirmatory. This is in the second book and if you want them you can have these reports. I have them. I also have not less than five taped interviews with two of those Hoover said were involved, if you want them. Dubious types, but one told me he had been offered \$50,000 to kill JFK. And this is not in the FBI reports. (Later two others told me of plots against Duvalier in which the FBI had no interest. I offer<sup>ed</sup> them the tape of the interview through Internal Security Division.)

I repeat this is not criticism of the Post, Lardner or his desk. I do not equate it with the judgement reflected in the Post refusal to print a word about that 1/22/64 transcript I wish you would read personally. Or with the attitude I encountered Thursday with Geyelin's office.

My concerns are about the selective abandonment of traditional standards of news writing and judgements, about the facility with which officials can manipulate what appears and does not appear, and what this can mean to the country, particularly in what I regard as a crucial and dangerous period.

Currently there seems to be no end to them and I can't remember a time, even during the Warren Commission period, when they were as frequent and consistent. I was told yesterday that the Boston Globe had a story <sup>neutron</sup> dating the ~~neutron~~-activation analyses for which I'm suing and have in part confirms the official solution to the JFK material. When I offered what I had already obtained to UPI and the Post without interest, I left an unanswered message at the Globe's Washington office. They also wrote this story without speaking to me. I think I also qualify as an obvious expert on this having made the study that underlies the case I took ~~to~~ the Supreme Court and being the current litigant. Without casting aspersions at the Globe, where I know nobody, I offer the opinion that this exemplifies bad journalism and represents a probable solicitation to being used. The simplest proof is that the required NAA tests simply were never made. I tell you this based on Kelley's letter in this suit of 5/10/75 and the papers I have been given under it. To date, that is, because I've proven in court that they swore falsely in saying they have given me all, as Kelley also says in this letter. (I've already offered <sup>again</sup> and offer the Post copies. ~~again~~ If you want to send this to the ~~Post~~ ~~Globe~~ <sup>again</sup> ~~Globe~~, where I have no contacts or even names, please do.)

If I were not sincerely worried about the potential of all of this I'd not be taking this time. I hope you will find enough time to think about it.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg